

Policy context for cycling in Queensland

Purpose

This note sets out some of the key national, state and regional policies that should be considered when delivering an improved environment for cycling in Queensland.

Supporting increased cycling

Simply urging more people to cycle or concentrating solely on reducing numbers of injuries are inappropriate strategies to increase cycling. Instead, efforts should be directed towards creating a safer environment in which to cycle. At the same time, a need exists to encourage safe, responsible and confident behaviour by cyclists, drivers, riders of motorcycles and scooters, and pedestrians.

Promotion of cycling may lead to benefits such as:

- safer roads
- improved health (e.g. addresses obesity, community well-being)
- social equity
- improvements to the public realm
- a reduction in congestion at peak times
- safer travel to school
- supporting local business
- increased mobility
- support public opinion
- improved air quality
- fun and enjoyment
- tourism economic gains
- skills development - in children particularly.

Road authorities can benefit from:

- reduced demand for car parking and reduced congestion at peak times leading to lower costs (e.g. road user costs and environmental costs)
- improved environmental image
- less road maintenance.

Employers and industry can benefit from:

- reduced demand for employer-provided car parking
- reduced congestion at peak times leading to lower costs
- improved environmental image
- improved health and fitness of the workforce leading to better performance
- greater transport choice enabling staff to arrive on time (less lost time)
- access to wider labour force

Cycling is much more than a form of recreation. Although the benefits of recreational cycling are significant, it is also a legitimate and increasingly popular mode of transport that must be supported in the transport network. Cycling is an economical, environmentally-friendly and healthy means of transport. It provides an alternative to private motor vehicles for short trips. For longer journeys, bikes combine well with public transport where provision is made for them (see Cycle Note C6 - *Cycling and public transport* and Cycle Note C4 – *End-of-trip facilities for bicycle riders*).

Aim

This series of notes aims to assist planners and engineers to provide for cycling in their local area.

The Cycle Notes should be read in conjunction with:

- Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 14 – Bicycles (Austroads, 1999)
- Queensland Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Part 9 Bicycle Facilities
- Road Planning and Design Manual (Queensland Department of Main Roads).

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Barriers to increasing cycling in Queensland include:

- other government priorities limiting funds available to cycling
- cost of retro-fitting cycling facilities to existing infrastructure (e.g. roads)
- average distances to cover
- lack of safe and convenient cycle routes
- lack of secure end-of-trip facilities
- discontinuous cycling routes
- perceived social status of cycling for transport
- perceived danger of cycling (e.g. speed of other road users).

In most circumstances these and other barriers can be overcome. Generally, improving the on-road and off-road environment for cyclists will encourage more people to cycle, as will better integration with public transport. For journeys to work, a cycle-supportive attitude from employers, backed by end-of-trip facilities such as secure bicycle parking, change rooms, showers, lockers, ironing facilities etc, can lead to a significant increase in cycle commuting. Improving the safety of routes to school and providing bike education, training and encouragement can have a positive impact on school journeys.

To deliver positive cycling outcomes for recreation and transport purposes, a supportive policy and planning environment is needed. It should be recognised that this environment extends beyond transport and recreation. In a whole-of-government policy approach, opportunities to further cycling interests exist and should be sought. Health, education, open space, sport and recreation, and tourism policy objectives can all benefit from cycling.

Cycling plays an important part of an integrated transport system. It is a flexible, relatively cheap, environmentally friendly and healthy way to travel. However, cycling needs to be made safer and more convenient.

Some examples of individual plans and policies that support cycling are presented below.

Planning and policy environment

At the national level

The Australian National Cycling Strategy 2005 - 2010 was launched by the Federal Government with a vision of increasing national participation in cycling and improving safety for cyclists. This national policy, which has been committed to by all state governments, provides a framework for program delivery. The priorities of the strategy include creating infrastructure and facilities that support increased cycling, and developing partnerships to promote cycling as an essential component within integrated transport and land use planning. *The Australian National Cycling Strategy 2005 - 2010* can be found at the website <http://www.abc.dotars.gov.au>.

The *National Greenhouse Strategy* (1998) is part of the implementation of the *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development*. The objective for the transport sector is to reduce the total energy it consumes. One strategy to achieve this objective is to increase the number of trips made by bicycle. A key component of the *National Greenhouse Strategy* is to provide increased opportunities for cycling and better designed infrastructure for communities that will reduce the need to travel by car. Another key strategy is to retrofit existing road and transport systems to ensure that a coherent, direct and safe cycle network is developed across communities. The *National Greenhouse Strategy* can be found at the website <http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/pubs/ngs/>.

The *National Public Health Partnership* (NPHP) has defined a portfolio approach to public health planning. Under the auspices of the NPHP, the *Strategic Inter-Governmental forum on Physical Activity and Health* (SIGPAH) was formed in 1999 and has defined the area of transport as a high-priority setting to promote physical activity. SIGPAH agreed to pilot the framework approach to develop a portfolio of interventions to address this issue. Its publication *Promoting Active Transport – An Intervention Portfolio to Increase Physical Activity as a Means of Transport* (2001) can be found at the website http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/nphp/publications/a_z.htm.

At the Queensland level

The *Queensland Cycle Strategy* (2003) is the key document for cycling policy in Queensland. The strategy provides strategic direction and a policy framework for the implementation of cycling as a sustainable and safe transport mode throughout Queensland. The *Queensland Cycle Strategy* supports implementation of *the Australian National Cycling Strategy 2005-2010*.

The *Integrated Planning Act 1997* (IPA) is the key legislation underpinning cycle planning. IPA seeks to achieve ecological sustainability through coordinating and integrating planning and managing the process of development and its effects on the environment (IPA Explanatory Guide, 1997:1). It proposes to achieve ecological sustainability through the use of three processes: the Integrated Development Assessment System; Integrated Planning; and Integrated Dispute Resolution. Under the Act, those responsible for development assessment must ensure the effective and efficient integration of transport infrastructure into existing and future development, including public transport and cycling networks within the local government area. Infrastructure Charges Schedules and Priority Infrastructure Plans in the schemes are the place to do this (see Cycle Note A3 - *Funding mechanisms for cycling infrastructure*). The IPA can be found at the website <http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/I/IntegPlanA97.pdf>.

The draft *State Interest Planning Policy No.2* (SIPP No.2) outlines methods on how to incorporate state cycling interests into local government planning schemes. These schemes are the primary tool for creating an environment that supports public transport, cycling and walking trips at a local level. The draft SIPP provides a suite of guiding principles to be adopted when drafting scheme provisions. It also has an example of an on-site facilities code and examples of other cycling provisions that can be included in an IPA Planning Scheme. It can be accessed at the Queensland Transport website: <http://www.transport.qld.gov.au>

The State Cycle Committee (SCC) is the government's key advisory body for cycling in Queensland. Organisations with responsibility for cycling in Queensland including state and local government, cycling organisations and industry have representatives on the committee. The committee meets quarterly and has a range of working groups on key cycling issues. Queensland Transport's Policy Implementation Team's cycling group is the secretariat for the SCC.

Shaping Up is a guide to better practice and integration of transport, land use and urban design techniques. The policy focuses on shaping urban communities to support public transport, cycling and walking in Queensland and links with the *Integrated Regional Transport Plan* (IRTP) for South East Queensland. It was produced to support integrated transport and outlines ways in which land use planning and urban design can reduce both the number and length of trips. *Shaping Up* also shows how these approaches can support other more environmentally-friendly ways of travel such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport. The policy aims to improve liveability, environmental sustainability and social equity.

The *Integrated Transport Planning Framework* (ITPF) is a practical guide for integrating transport planning in Queensland. It represents commitment from Queensland Transport, Queensland Department of Main Roads (Main Roads), Department of Local Government and Planning, Sport and Recreation and the Local Government Association of Queensland to collaborative, consistent and sustainable transport planning. Cycling forms part of the integrated approach to transport planning.

The Main Roads' *Cycling on State Controlled Roads* policy describes how cycling is to be provided for on state declared roads. It seeks, within certain constraints, to ensure that provision is made for cycling on priority cycling routes (via state declared road/s or suitable alternatives). On other routes, Main Roads will seek to make these cycle-friendly where practical.

Policy context for cycling in Queensland

At the regional level

Regional areas throughout Queensland are at various stages in the development of regional planning frameworks and *Integrated Regional Transport Plans* (IRTPs). These do/will incorporate and support cycling at the regional level.

Many of these documents are available at the Queensland Transport website <http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/>.

An example of how the regional transport planning and policy environment can support cycling is described in the case study below:

Case Study: South East Queensland

The IRTP for South East Queensland (SEQ) was developed to provide a sustainable transport response to increasing population growth and travel demand.

This is a 25-year plan for a transport system in the region that established targets for increased use of public transport, ride sharing, walking and cycling and consequent reductions in private motor vehicle trips.

Among these targets is an 8% cycling modal share target that needs to be met by 2011.

This represents an increase of 805,400 cycling trips per day across SEQ.

Transport 2007 is a short to medium-term action plan for SEQ which represents what needs to happen by 2007 if we are to reach the long-term transport targets of the IRTP (SEQ). Cycle-supportive actions found in *Transport 2007* include:

- requirements for end-of-trip facilities for commercial and other major developments in planning schemes
- undertake audits of existing major trip attractors to identify the deficiencies and needs of bicycle end-of-trip facilities
- preparing local cycling network plans for incorporation into planning schemes.

One of the actions in the IRTP and *Transport 2007* called for the development of an integrated cycle strategy for the region.

Transport 2007 and a summary of the IRTP are available at <http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/>.



Cycle South East was launched by the Minister for Transport in October 1999. This strategy is the key to achieving the state government's target for an increase in bike trips from 2% to 8% of all trips in South East Queensland by the year 2011. *Cycle South East* addresses a number of key elements including integrating cycling into transport planning processes, integration with public transport, land use planning, safety, education, encouragement, enforcement, infrastructure and end-of-trip facilities. *Cycle South East* is available at the website <http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/>.



The *Integrated Regional Cycle Network Plan* for South East Queensland (IRCNP) was produced to identify a regional cycling network that will guide local governments in preparing and implementing local cycling network plans. It also guides local governments and state agencies in developing key cycle facilities and assists local governments in preparing their infrastructure payment schedules. The IRCNP is available at the website <http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/>.

At the local level

Planning and policy mechanisms provide the opportunity to plan and deliver bicycle infrastructure/facilities within a cycling supportive environment. This is achieved through maps, key objectives, desired environmental outcomes, planning codes/policies, priority measures and/or acceptable solutions, as found in the following documents:

- Local government planning schemes
- Local Area Plans (LAPs)
- Development Control Plans (DCPs)
- Integrated Local Transport Plans (ILTPs)
- Infrastructure Charges Plans (ICPs)
- Local Cycle Strategy (LCS)
- Local Cycle Network Plans (LCNPs)
- Regional Cycle Network Plans (RCNPs)
- local growth management strategies
- open space strategies
- waterway and catchment management plans
- recreation plans with a bicycle strategy component.

It is important that the provision of cycle infrastructure be consistent with both a Local Cycle Strategy and a Local Cycle Network Plan. If these documents do not exist, their development can be carried out as part of an ILTP (see Cycle Note A4 - *Developing a local cycle strategy and local cycle network plan*).

By ensuring the future planning and provision of infrastructure is coherent with a LCS, LCNP and RCNP, local governments and developers will:

- maximise investment opportunities
- ensure a connected cycle network of on-road and off-road facilities linking to major attractors
- maximise opportunities to facilitate increased numbers of cyclists
- provide for a sustainable mode of transport that is safe, convenient and attractive.

What does this mean for cycle planning?

Cycling is a legitimate mode of transport. The bicycle is also one of the most cost-effective of all urban transportation modes. Transport planning processes need to recognise and cater for cycling in the transport system with the same degree of attention and appropriate funding as other transport modes.

The policy contexts outlined and referred to in this document should underpin strategic planning processes. There are multiple agencies that will benefit from the implementation of the interventions and these can be seen as key stakeholders. Among these stakeholders are agencies interested in physical activity and health, transport, urban planning, environment, local government and special user groups such as the Australian Bicycle Council.

This Cycle Note is published by
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